HARAMBEE NEWS

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INTER-CULTURAL COALITION FORMED

The Native American, Chicano, and African(in America) cultural organizations here at the pen have recently formed a coalition out of a shared concern about common problems(racism, economic oppression, etc.) and a desire to learn more about each others' culture and history. The coalition will meet periodically to discuss problems and programs, make decisions on possible actions, and then take these decisions to the respective groups for approval or denial. Each of the three cultural organizations will have two representatives in the coalition.

The first concrete result of this unifying effort will take place next month when members of all three groups will be invited to a performance of a Chicano dance group. The fee for this performance is being paid by contributions from members of the three organizations.

AMIR REPORTS ON TRIP TO UNIVERSITY

An old Chinese proverb says: "If you are planning for a year, plant grains; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for a millenium, plant men." It is through education that men are "planted" and millenia are built.

Recently, Bro. Cliff Davis and myself were allowed to impart and receive an education in awareness. The Pan-African Secretariat and African People's Union were given an opportunity to receive first-hand information concerning prison life and prison structure(regimentation). Bro. Davis and I were given a beautiful impression of the growing concern for our people who are incarcerated throughout America.

On Feb. 13th. Bro. Cliff Davis and I were at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln to speak on the conditions here at N.S.P. The program was sponsored by the African People's Union. During the program Bro. Davis amazed the people with his extensive knowledge of law and diplomacy and was complimented many times relative to his goals, values, and achievement--both family and personal. He gave a clear perception of legal problems that have given and continue to give prisoners discomfort. He addressed the pros and cons involved with minimum wage issues, food preparation and kitchen sanitation, clothing, "good time" laws and policies, and his position as legal advisor(jailhouse lawyer). He further elaborated on such issues as the State's position on minimal living space per prisoner as compared to the federal position. Bro. Davis pointed out that the State was attempting to adhere to the federal regulations in the construction of the new prison facility being built. He expressed, however, his concern with the "kangaroo" court system to which prisoners here are subjected. He identified legitimate issues and cleared up obscure and/or dubious ones.

I responded to questions concerning the inequities that exist in this total system, as well as its big sister, society, the inequities that arise as a result of both subtle and overt racism. Issues I expounded on dealt with the Bilalian(Black) population being approximately 36% here at the prison while there are but about a half dozen Bilalian on staff and among the Correctional personel. I spoke of the inequities that exist in the ratio of Bilalian students as opposed to Caucasian students in post-care programs. Also I addressed the matter of racism exhibited in all the community-based programs when it comes to the selection of who is to participate in jobs and school.

Bro. Davis and I both responded to questions during the question-and-response segment of the program, which was moderated by Bro. Hadari. We gave a pragmatic, as opposed to

HARAMBEE AFRO-CULTURAL ORG. ELECTS NEW CHAIRMAN

Recently the Harambee Afro-Cultural Org. held a special election to fill the vacated post of chairman. David Rice was elected and, in accepting the office, he told the membership that it would be his objective to make the organization's meetings more exciting and thought-provoking so that the members might be brought to greater understanding of the implications of being African in the United States. It is hoped that the new chairman will be successful in leading the organization in this direction.

FIRST YOUTH COUNSELING SESSION HELD

After many months of anxious waiting, the Harambee Afro-Cultural Org. was finally enabled to hold its first counseling session with youth. On the evening of Feb. 13th. six members of Harambee met with a group of five youth brought to the pen by R.D. Waller of the Great Plains Black Museum in Omaha. The purpose of this program, like other such prisoner-sponsored programs here at the institution, is to counsel troubled youth away from activities that may lead them into the jaws of the prison and toward attitudes and activities that will make their lives productive. Harambee is keenly aware of the need for strong and positive leadership in black communities in this country and the loss of potential leaders to this nation's jails and prisons.

We thank the Great Plains Black Museum for this opportunity to help our Brothers and Sisters outside the walls and are hopeful that our efforts will bear positive fruit.

CATCH BUDDY'S SHOW

As little meaningful media programming as there is, we should seize upon every opportunity to catch such programming when available. Buddy Hogan has a Saturday program on radio station KCRO-am. "Community Issues" airs from ten in the morning 'til noon. The topics discussed are well worth checking out. Tune Buddy in.

BROTHERS & SISTERS: A MEETING OF MINDS

At our Feb. 11th. general membership meeting, we conducted a program on relations between black men and black women. This issue has become of increasing concern to many black men and women in this country over the past several months. The black men who comprise Harambee have an intense concern about this question in that imprisonment and its accompanying isolation of men from women sharpens our awareness, often painfully so, of the value of our Sisters to us.

This awareness was made plainly evident during this program of the 11th. That there are serious problems of misunderstanding and gaps of communication was also made evident. The five Sisters from the African People's Union at U.N.L. and the twenty-five or so Harambee members and inside guests had an exciting and generally open discussion of what they perceived as the main obstacles to understanding and love between Brothers and Sisters. Among the primary obstacles cited by the Sisters were: overly materialist values on the part of black men, their readiness to choose white women over black women, and their tendency to be uptight about what they perceive as being their "manhood." The Brothers' major concerns seemed to be: that black women too readily give up on their men, particularly when they wind up in prison; that put too much pressure on their men to achieve economically; and that, when black women are college educated, they tend to "lord it over" their men.

The program made it apparent that we have a lot of work to as a people to deal with this important issue. But it was also evident that we can open lines of communication if we are simply willing to be honest with ourselves, with each other. There will be a follow-up program on the 3rd. of March at six in the evening. We thank Hadari and Shamari of the Lincoln chapter of the Pan-African Secretariat and Deresa of the African People's Union for being of aid to us in instituting this effort to bring about understanding.

AMIR REPORTS ON TRIP TO UNIVERSITY

surreal, view of the conditions in prison. We gave responses to questions that raised more than just eyebrows, particularly when we described an anal search and the legal questions involved, homosexuality in the prison, and the extreme difficulty in Bilalian prisoners trying to communicate with and get understanding from administrative officials and other staff because of their gross lack of association with Bilalians, our culture and ideologies.

All 'n all it was a very rewarding and beautiful experience to be in the company of my kind of beautiful people, --Al-hamdu-illah--those who talk, look, see, feel and act like you and who are about the same things. On behalf of the Harambee Afro-Cultural Organization, Bro. Cliff Davis and I want to thank all of you beautiful Brothers and Sisters on campus for being so wonderful to us. A very special thanx to Bro. Hadari, Bro. Shamari, Sis. Deresa, Sis. Doreen, and the Brother with the camera.

-Amir Shahid Mustafaa

A STIMULATING THOUGHT

To be born into a world where the pigmentation of your skin decides whether or not you are successful is a very disgraceful thing. However, we must not let this cause us to be at a stand-still with our self-awareness or our motivation to make matters better. For acceptance of what has happened is the first step in our overcoming the consequences of our misfortune.

-Orlando Jackson

LAST LOVER

I came to see you one day, offering you my true love. But you weren't there. I tried every way I could to win back your love. But it had already flown. My heart sent out its signals to your heart, using my mouth as the medium. The signals came back suddenly, letting me know you no longer needed me. I had served my purpose for you.

My heart through my mouth its words of love, of caring, of the way it felt, the things it wished to do for you. It spoke passionately, softly, sincerely...all in vain. The wind echoed the laughter in our hearts...and time slipped by with the evening breeze.

When you and I were one a nd life was at our command, tears were never seen and pain never felt. But now all I have of yesterday is the silent star, the dreams and wishes of a lover past...lost lover. I had to let it pass despite the pain, had to be cool. Was I cool or was it real, was it fake, lost lover? Enough to make me wiser next time, to know that love is just another way of life and not the truth...anymore.

Can it always be a special feeling of seeing into yourself when you look into your friend's eyes, trusting even though hurting?...so that friend doesn't ask, "Did you really feel that way once?" It is seldom I say "love," and then too late, too hurting to know your love is lost to me and found by my best friend.

-James Muhammad Moore

UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE DRAFT: IS THERE A CONNECTION?

After staying in Detroit for three weeks recently and observing the condition of unemployment caused by massive lay-offs by GM and Ford and the shutdown at Dodge Main (which is the backbone of the motor city), I am concerned about what will be the fate of these 200,000 unemployed. I was reading in the newspaper where a job riot had taken place. There was an ad which had been placed in the paper for a warehouse job asking applicants to be at the door by 7:30 a.m. By 7:00 three hundred people had arrived and, when the employer announced that there were only a few positions open, the crowd went mad and commenced to destroying the property. The workers there just stood back and looked. And not even the police could control the crowd.

There are many people in this country who are without jobs. They look for work and find none. I think it is more than coincidence that the U.S. is having its present interna-

tional troubles, that the President is calling for patriotism, that he is calling for draft registration. What war will he convene? Who will go to a foreign land to fight for America, to fight for the very American capitalism that is responsible for the war being waged here and now against the survival of America's poor?

-Jaha(Deresa Oliver)

Mashairi funguwani/Poets: open the riddle

SUNDAY MORNING(or MOURNING)

Within this steel-barred house
of cold cement
instilled mortalities subsist;
Righteous, Perplexed
Folk: human blossoms, black, brown, white
and often blue
moral vicissitudes
wanting to be appreciated;
replete with the dexterity of hopelessness.
Still hallucinations of leaving this milieu
projects distant hope;
and even(all)
hypochondriacs are obsessed
with prenature malcontent.
Within this steel-barred house
of cold cement
subsist many efficient thoughts
but repugnant individualism
detests submission
so delusions do birth dreams,
conceptions seduced by laughter
because pseudo-freedom means
to regenerate a holographic deal
dealing with madness
and the love of tomorrow
sure makes wonderment
real.

-H. "Wili" Otey
(death row, Neb. State Pen)

WHAT IS SAID OVER THE DEAD LION'S BODY

COULD NOT BE SAID TO HIM ALIVE.

-Madagascar proverb

THE MIDDLE GROUND

the water drips from the faucet
the drops so heavy against the porcelain
so heavy

and i try to snare elusive sleep
in the spaces in between
in the space in between
in the slender space in between
as i lie here trying to drift off

and i go deep
but not to sleep
but to that middle ground
into the misty haze
where memories seem foggily real
and just barely concealed
like this one of you
somewhat out of focus
just a little unclear
as if seen from behind a tear

and i go deep into the slender space
catching glimpses of my face
in your eyes
as i go drifting
drifting.

-David L. Rice

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The Harambee News is a publication of the Harambee Afro-Cultural Organization--P.O. Box 2500(Neb. State Pen); Lincoln, Neb.; 68502. You are encouraged to submit articles and/or short prose, poetry, etc. You may also send contributions of money by sending a money order to Harambee Afro-Cultural Org. Send articles, poetry, etc. care of the editor, David Rice. If you are interested in becoming more deeply involved with us, consider coming to the pen for a meeting. Call the pen and ask for our sponsor, Scott Marshall(ext. 396). We meet every Monday at alternating times, three and six p.m. Remember we will be conducting the follow-up program dealing with relations between black men and black women at our March 3rd. meeting. -the editor